

THE ADVOCATE

March 2009

Why I Come To Work

by Yajaira Recinos, Youth Development Specialist

I'm **Yajaira Recinos** and I am a Youth Development Specialist at the Oak Hill Youth Center. I work with youth in Unit 9b-Evolution, where I monitor the young men and teach them life skills to be prepared for their return home and to their communities. My passion to work with kids has been bringing me into work everyday for the past two years. I previously worked with youth through various church groups in Washington, DC, primarily targeting gang culture and street codes, and breaking those barriers with the youth in my unit during group workshops and discussions. [\[View video*\]](#)



Meet the Facilities Management Division

by Wayne Thomas, YSC Facilities Manager, and Charles Brown, OHYC Facilities Manager



The Snow Detail (from left to right in photos): Keith Washington, Wendell "bobcat" Cavin, Ricky Weaver, Calvin Brown, Monica Bennett, Marty Resper, Carl Matthews, Timothy Cox, James Seldon, William Hoyle, Wayne Thomas, Denise Harvest, Andre J. Smith, Andre C. Lattimore (not in picture).

With 538 feet of public sidewalk and 3 acres at the Youth Services Center, and with 800 acres at the Oak Hill Youth Center, the snow detail crew did an outstanding job of working around the clock to clear and treat surfaces during the severe snow storm on Monday, March 2, 2009. Both the Detained Services Administration and Committed Services Administration snow crew used an assortment of snow equipment to complete the job. Kudos to both teams!

Victim Offender Reconciliation Program/Guns to Roses Project

by Linda HarleeHarper, Program Manager of Resource Management and Utilization Division and John Mein, Recreation and Special Projects Coordinator

As part of the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program, DYRS youth were afforded the opportunity to hear from the victims and families affected by violence. In collaboration with ROOT, Inc., the panelists educated the youth on how much harm gun violence has brought to individuals, families, communities, and the youth themselves. Working in conjunction with the program, the Metropolitan Police Department and Matthew Barinholtz from the See Forever Foundation work with youth at the Oak Hill Youth Center to transform items from implements of violence into objects of beauty and function in the Guns to Roses Project.



Panelists (from left to right in photo): Lisa "Too Fierce" Foster, Michele Smith Wilson, William Kellibrew, Kenny Barnes, President of ROOT, Inc.



DYRS Intern Testifies at DC Council

by John Mein, Recreation and Special Projects Coordinator

Taking the great leap to make a difference in the lives of other youths, **Jerome**, formerly a DYRS youth, returned to the agency as a part-time intern and employee. The opportunity was provided courtesy of the **See Forever Foundation** and the **Young Adult Corporation of Washington, DC**. Jerome took the initiative to share his story and how he plans to give back to his community, with the DC Council at the agency's Performance Oversight Hearing.

Agency Recognized for Its Advancements in Juvenile Justice Reform

The **National Juvenile Justice Network** recently released its **2007-2008 Advances in Juvenile Justice Reform** book, where it listed the agency's achievement in juvenile justice reform. It noted the department's recognition as one of the Top 50 programs in the nation awarded by The Ash Institute's Innovations in American Government Award Program at Harvard's Kennedy School.



Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services